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THE OHIO COMMUNITY THEATRE ASSOCIATION

Volume LVI, Issue 2

April 2008

Community Theatre is our life.....

Who knew when I sang my first solo at age six, that "life on the stage" was going to be a lifelong hobby for me.

It has been a tremendous learning experience from learning about Smokey the Bear (my first solo) who turned 60 in 2006 to learning about Philip Glass and Leon Trotsky (*All In The Timing*). Many shows are historic learning experiences such as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Sound of Music*, *Titanic*, and *Always, Patsy Cline*; or religious learning experiences with *Beau Jest*, *Godspell*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

I have made many friends all over Ohio, as well as Wisconsin, Michigan, and New York and when the City Manager from Sidney resigned to go to Hudson, Ohio, I already knew people who lived there.

And I've lost some good friends I've made doing community theater. One of my best friends taught me a lot about theater and friendship and even served as a connection between Van Wert Civic Theatre and the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC when VWCT sold their show's costumes from *When Pigs Fly* to the Chorus. And that same friend died way too young.

That friendship also had me traveling to Washington, DC a number of times, which I probably would not have done had it not been to go see him in shows. OCTA and AACT have sent me all over Ohio as well as to Benton Harbor, Michigan where I saw international theater excerpts; and to Torrington, Connecticut where I saw shows from Massachusetts, Germany, Louisiana, Colorado and beyond. I've traveled to Kalamazoo, Michigan, Schaumburg, Illinois, and who would've believed that after all those NASCAR races I watched coming from Lowe's Motor Speedway in Charlotte, North Carolina, I would get to ride around that very track in a van (at 80 miles an hour), just a few days before attending the 2007 National AACT-fest.

Community theater and friends have taken me to New York City five times in the last 16 years. During two of those trips I got to catch up with a great aunt whom I hadn't seen since I was 4, who had lived in the City for most of her life, working for the New York City Library. I ended up being the last family member to see her before she passed away at the age of 90 in 1998.

So, let's celebrate April (it's my favorite month anyhow). And, when someone says community theater is just a group of artsy people putting on plays, we will all know differently, as community theater has broadened our horizons and friendship base, and made us all the princesses, divas, and superstars we dreamed of being as kids!



Christi Thomas

I'll Take Two!!

from Harold Poppe

The Sweetness of Famous Pairs Will Enhance Annual Costume Ball

Adam and Eve, Romeo and Juliet, Abbott and Costello, Lucy and Desi, Bert and Ernie, Salt and Pepper, tea and crumpets, pickles and ice cream, a stage manager and her box, Dolly Parton's Pair, and the list goes on and on....

This Labor Day Weekend at the OCTA Annual Conference, "**OCTA, How Sweet It Is,**" you will have the opportunity to bring to life your favorite pair for an exciting costume contest during the Sunday evening dance in the Grand Ballroom. And when you think about pairs, remember that not all pairs require two individuals to bring the pair to life. Creativity and ingenuity is another famous pair that can excel in this type of competition.

Oh, and did we mention that there will be judging. After all, isn't that what a contest is?!?!? Contests and judging must be another famous pair!

So get your brainwaves in gear and bring your own special pair to life.

Conference is getting *SWEETER*, the closer we get to **Labor Day weekend 2008**. See you there.



Dancing with our OCTA Stars

Put on your dancing shoes and start getting sponsors for this year's main fundraiser, Dancing With Our OCTA Stars! This "dancing competition" will start on Friday Night after OCTA, Jr. The top ten couples (the ones with the most money) will move on to the finals where they will try to woo the crowd and take home one of the top prizes.

So, where do you fit into this competition? Well, if you are an OCTA Board Member or Regional Representative, you are an OCTA Star. Surprise!! Anyone who is planning on attending State Conference has the chance to be a partner. There are 40 Stars to choose from. Registration forms will be available on the website starting on May 1. Stars will be given out on a first-come first-serve basis using postmarks to determine partners. Registration is \$25. The couples will be announced in July and posted on the website. Starting in May, the website will be updated to show which Stars are still

available. Our goal is to have 40 couples on Friday night.

How will the competition work? Friday night, the choreographer, who will be doing workshops during the festival, will teach all couples a basic routine. Then, all the couples will entertain the crowd by performing this dance. Each couple will have a box and you can vote by putting money in their box. The 10 couples with the most money in their boxes will advance to the Sunday Finals. Here, each couple will have 3 minutes to free-style and impress their audience. Anything goes for this dance – props, costumes, etc. Again, the top three moneymakers will win the top prizes.

Now, you can get pretty creative with this and get sponsors ahead of time to guarantee a spot in the finals for your favorite couple. You can even pad your own box, if you are so inclined! Whether you are dancing or watching, this is sure to be a fun time for all and hopefully very profitable for OCTA. Check the OCTA website for updates and prize announcements.

Columbus theaters win awards

from Joyce Leahy

The Columbus Theatre Roundtable handed out its annual awards for excellence in Columbus theater, both professional and amateur. Here is a list of OCTA member theaters:

Curtain Players Darkside:

Lighting Design—Mark Peters

Sound Design—Eric Dwing

Acting—Trygve Hoff

Acting—Mark Schuliger

Directing—Jeremy Sony

Curtain Players To Gillian on her 37th Birthday:

Acting—Jim Petsche

Directing—Michael Parsons

Outstanding Production Award

Curtain Players Beau Jest:

Acting—Charlie Sloin

Curtain Players Book of Days:

Acting—Bonnie Milligan

Emerald City You Can't Take it With You:

Props & Set Dressing—Linda Sopp

Emerald City Greater Tuna:

Acting—Michael Day

LTOB And Then There Were None:

Acting—Jim Dipple

CONGRATS TO ALL THE WINNERS!!

News from the Board....

OCTA Board members met on March 15 at the Crowne Plaza Columbus North, site of the 2008 Conference. Board pictures were taken and the group got a feel for what all will be happening during this year's Conference, including a taste of the great food in the hotel's restaurant.

The Finance Division reported things are progressing for the "Dancing with Our Stars" to be held at Conference. They are also still working on new logo items and will be giving out two \$400 college scholarships this year.

The Marketing/Membership/PR Division is working on contacting community theaters in Ohio who are not already OCTA members and working on acknowledging the milestone of our current member theaters. They are also still working on getting the Monographs and the Resource Directory updated. There are still a lot of theaters who have not returned their Membership Directory forms to Joyce.



Let's Dance

The Programming Division is busy working on OCTA Jr. and the annual Conference. The Responders for each regional festival and State Conference have been contracted. Invitations to the annual delegate meeting are included in the packets.

New lighting specs have been developed for a more user-friendly plot for both regional and state festivals.

One of the new rules about eliminating the practice of showcasing, is worded wrong in the delegate packets. The last sentence under rule 9A should be removed.

The Adm Division reports that the job descriptions and policies are still being updated. Also, the Hall of Fame book will be on display at all the regionals along with the display board.

The Site Selection Committee has chosen the Eastgate Holiday Inn for the 2009 OCTA Conference. Ohio AACTFest 2009 will be held February 20-22 at the Columbus Performing Arts Center, site of this year's OCTA Jr.

OCTA people in the news

from Christi Thomas

The September 23, 2007 edition of *The Times Reporter* (New Philadelphia, Ohio) featured an article on a "Jill of all trades," better known to most of us as Southeast Regional Rep **Karen Moffitt**. Last fall, after receiving one of the first "Spirit of Community Theatre" awards from OCTA, Karen was featured in the newspaper which described her as "a single mom, theater volunteer, musician, truck driver, and much more."

The article went on to explain her musical talents (playing flute since the fifth grade) is how she migrated to community theater, playing in the pit orchestra at Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County. During her five years at LTTC, she said she has done "bit parts" but would rather work behind the scenes building sets, sewing costumes, handling concessions, or being assistant director or stage manager.

Karen is working to renovate her 110-year-old home and raising her daughter Jennifer, a dog, and two cats.

In January, **Ruby Classen**, Central Regional Rep, was named as a member of the Emerging Leader Council. The Council is part of Americans for the Arts and is working to identify and cultivate the next generation of arts leaders in America. She joined a list of eight others from all over the United States including New Orleans, Brooklyn, Brownsville, El Paso, and Austin.

Ruby is currently the Grants and Services Coordinator for the Greater Columbus Arts Council, serves as President of the Board of Trustees for the Little Theatre Off Broadway (LTOB), is a representative for LTOB to the Theatre Roundtable in Columbus, and is also a member of Emerald City Players.

Shirley Goldsmith, Conference Chair in 1980, sent an addendum to Amy Boley's February article on "Theatre space vs. Hotel" and notes that some 30 years ago, the Board tried holding the conference on the campus of Berea College which displeased everyone because, even though the room rates were very reasonable, the twin-sized beds were hard and they had to go down the hall to use the bathroom. She also says that the year she was Conference Chair was the first year the event was held on Labor Day weekend (her idea) in Strongsville with over 600 in attendance.

CALLBOARD

CallBoard items should be sent to Joyce Leahy for publication. The April issue will list shows for April/May/June and the June issue will list shows for the balance of the summer months.

CENTRAL

04/04 - 04/13	<i>The Good Doctor</i>	Bucyrus Little Theatre	419-562-0731
04/11 - 04/27	<i>The Music Man</i>	Licking County Players	740-349-ACTS
04/11 - 04/27	<i>Arsenic and Old Lace</i>	Curtain Players	614-470-4809
04/18 - 05/03	<i>Bell, Book and Candle</i>	Emerald City Players	614-470-1525
04/18 - 05/03	<i>Messiah on the Frigidaire</i>	Alcove Theatre	740-392-3076
05/02 - 05/24	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Little Theatre Off Broadway	614-875-3919
05/09 - 05/17	<i>Psycho Beach Party</i>	Portsmouth Little Theatre	740-353-7034
05/09 - 05/26	<i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i>	Wagnalls Educational Theatre	614-837-4765
05/22 - 05/25	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Alcove Theatre	740-501-8589
05/23 - 06/08	<i>Steel Magnolias</i>	Curtain Players	614-470-4809
05/30 - 06/14	<i>The Lion in Winter</i>	Emerald City Players	614-470-1525
05/30 - 06/15	<i>Leading Ladies</i>	Licking County Players	740-349-ACTS
06/20 - 06/29	<i>Nunsense</i>	Galion Community Theatre	419-468-2662
06/26 - 06/29	<i>Peter Pan</i>	Alcove Theatre	740-485-0028

NORTHEAST

03/28 - 04/12	<i>Charlotte's Web</i>	Players Guild Theatre	330-453-7617
04/04 - 04/19	<i>The Full Monty</i>	Royalton Players	216-556-0415
04/11 - 04/19	<i>Enchanted April</i>	Berea Grindstone Players	440-234-9474
04/11 - 04/20	<i>Dearly Beloved</i>	Olde Towne Hall Theatre	440-327-2909
04/16 - 05/04	<i>Enchanted April</i>	Weathervane Playhouse	330-836-2626
04/17 - 05/04	<i>Adrift in New York</i>	Workshop Players	440-988-5613
04/18 - 04/27	<i>Agnes of God</i>	Carnation City Players	330-821-8712
04/18 - 05/11	<i>Miss Pell is Missing</i>	Clague Playhouse	440-331-0403
04/25 - 05/03	<i>The Melody Lingers On</i>	Brunswick Alumni Theatre	330-725-6443
04/25 - 05/17	<i>Cabaret</i>	Aurora Community Theatre	330-562-1818
05/05 - 05/17	<i>Spinning Into Butter</i>	Hudson Players	330-655-8522
05/09 - 05/18	<i>A Year with Frog and Toad</i>	Strongsville Community Theatre	
05/14 - 05/31	<i>And the Winner is</i>	Weathervane Playhouse	330-836-2626
05/16 - 05/24	<i>The Face on the Ballroom Floor</i>	Royalton Players	216-556-0415
05/22 - 06/14	<i>The Nerd</i>	Coach House Theatre	330-434-7741
05/23 - 06/14	<i>Peter Pan</i>	Players Guild Theatre	330-453-7617
05/30 - 06/11	<i>Joseph.....Technicolor Dreamcoat</i>	Garfield Heights Little Theatre	216-475-8313
06/04 - 06/29	<i>Ragtime</i>	Weathervane Playhouse	330-836-2626
06/13 - 06/22	<i>The Civil War - The Musical</i>	Carnation City Players	330-821-8712
06/29 - 07/13	<i>G.I. Jukebox</i>	Workshop Players	440-988-5613

SOUTHEAST

04/18 - 05/02	<i>Proof</i>	Little Theatre Tuscarawas Cty	330-343-4012
04/24 - 05/10	<i>Greater Tuna</i>	Mid Ohio Valley Players	740-374-9434
05/08 - 05/10	<i>Harvey</i>	Athenian Players/Berean Players	740-753-1924
05/16 - 05/25	<i>Complete Works...Shakespeare, abridged</i>	Zanesville Community Theatre	740-455-6487
06/13 - 06/28	<i>Barefoot in the Park</i>	Mid Ohio Valley Players	740-374-9434

NORTHWEST

04/04 - 04/12	<i>Second Time Around</i>	Off-Stage Productions	419-605-6708
04/11 - 04/13	<i>Cinderella</i>	McDonalds - Amil Tellers Youth	419-223-8866
04/17 - 04/20	<i>Guys and Dolls</i>	Fort Defiance Players	419-782-7529
04/18 - 04/27	<i>The Butler Did it Again</i>	Genoa Civic Theatre	419-855-3103
04/18 - 04/27	<i>Too Soon for Daisies</i>	Wapakoneta Theatre Guild	419-738-6069
04/24 - 05/04	<i>All I Need to Know ... Kindergarten</i>	Harlequins Community Theatre	419-621-1311
04/25 - 05/03	<i>Love, Sex & the IRS</i>	Troy Civic Theatre	937-339-7700
04/25 - 05/04	<i>Rehearsal For Murder</i>	Ritz Players	419-448-8544
05/01 - 05/17	<i>Nunsensations: The Nonsense Vegas Revue</i>	Van Wert Civic Theatre	419-238-9689
05/02 - 05/17	<i>Don't Dress for Dinner</i>	The Village Players	419-472-6827
05/02 - 05/18	<i>Guys and Dolls</i>	Fremont Community Theatre	419-332-0695
05/08 - 05/17	<i>The Best Man</i>	Fort Findlay Playhouse	419-422-4624
05/08 - 05/18	<i>The Senator Wore Pantyhose</i>	Playmakers Civic Theatre	419-734-5044
05/09 - 05/18	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	Encore - Amil Tellers	419-223-8866
06/06 - 06/22	<i>Cabaret</i>	Toledo Repertoire Theatre	419-243-9277
06/19 - 06/22	<i>Spoon River Anthology</i>	Bellevue Society for the Arts	419-484-2787
06/26 - 06/29	<i>Urinetown</i>	Fort Defiance Players	419-782-7529

SOUTHWEST

04/03 - 04/13	<i>The Retreat from Moscow</i>	Stagecrafters	513-793-6237
04/04 - 04/12	<i>Odd Couple - female version</i>	Milford Theatre Guild	513-575-2103
04/11 - 04/19	<i>Dearly Beloved</i>	Village Players of Ft. Thomas	589-781-3583
04/17 - 04/27	<i>More than Meets the Eye</i>	Brookville Community Theatre	513-833-3531
04/18 - 04/26	<i>These are the Days of our Ives</i>	Tri-County Players	513-471-2030
04/18 - 04/26	<i>Night Watch</i>	Middletown Lyric Theatre	513-425-7140
05/01 - 05/18	<i>Children of Eden</i>	Footlighters, Inc.	513-474-8711
05/02 - 05/18	<i>Funny Girl</i>	Dayton Playhouse	937-424-8477
05/02 - 05/10	<i>Inherit the Wind</i>	Drama Workshop	513-598-8303
05/02 - 05/17	<i>Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure</i>	Sunset Players	513-588-4988
05/02 - 05/18	<i>Weekend Comedy</i>	Mariemont Players	513-684-1236
05/09 - 05/18	<i>Enchanted April</i>	Lebanon Theatre Company	513-228-0932

The **OCTA Website Competition** is returning this year, and finally with an official format. As your webmaster, I have been proud to write this competition leaning on my many years of experience in the computer field.

The internet is becoming ever increasingly one of the first places people go for information, and with the creativity of the members of our theatres, it makes sense to use the web to enhance our contact and communication within the communities we serve.

The new contest format allows adjudicators to evaluate web sites on 100 specific points in five categories of 20 points each. And awards of Outstanding, Excellence and Merit in each of the five categories, as well as overall web site design are possible. There will even be a First-Place overall web site award.

At first glance, the number of evaluated criteria looks like a lot. Never fear; even the most basic web site created meets more than half the evaluated points with nary a thought to anything but design.

I have acquainted myself with most of the web sites of our member theatres. There are some really good examples of creative, effective web designs.

In order to be eligible to be considered for any award of Outstanding and the First-Place overall web site award, your web site must have the OCTA logo and a link to OCTA's web site on the main/first/home page of your theatre's web site. You'll find the entire competition information available for download at www.octaweb.org. I hope we'll see some interest in this revived competition.

Rick Lee, OCTA Webmaster

Regional Reports

Central Region delegates met on January 26 and voted to present two \$100 scholarship awards to two Central Region theaters who are not invited to attend State Conference. The \$100 will go toward registration fees for members of their theater who will be attending Conference. The delegates also voted to present \$500 to Conference Chair Harold Poppe for use at the 2008 Conference which will be held in the Central Region. They also challenged other Regions to help with the costs of Conference.

The next meeting will be held on April 5 at Licking County Players Theatre in Newark where packets for the regional festival will be distributed to theater delegates.

As with many other parts of Ohio, many shows were canceled the first weekend in March due to the snowstorm, making it hard to reschedule those performances. — *Fred Wise*

The **NorthEast Region** delegates met for a dinner meeting on January 26 at the Coach House Theatre, who are celebrating their 80th birthday, and learned some interesting history.

Reps Dawna Kornick and Leigh Sandmann attended the Mid-Winter Institute in Marietta where they attended some informative Workshops and had the opportunity to participate in a Radio Theatre recording.

The Reps met on February 23 for dinner and brainstorming at the Moosehead Lodge. They then met on March 1 for a tour of the Holiday Inn Express and Café 422.

The next delegate meeting will be held March 29 at 3 pm hosted by Broadview Heights Spotlights to discuss plans for the 2008 regional festival June 21-22 at Trumbull New Theatre. We are OCTA NE! —*Dawna Kornick*

Spring seems to be a long time in coming, but should be arriving soon, as will the next meeting of the **Northwest Region** delegates. "God willing and the creek don't rise," they will meet at Fort Findlay Playhouse, on March 29 at 11:00 am to go over the packets for the regional festival to be held in Lima on June 13-15. The Reps will be ascertaining which theaters are planning to excerpt in June and are looking forward to a tour of the Playhouse and hearing of their trials and tribulations of last summer's floods.

The May meeting will be held at Lima Encore to walk the stage and the final meeting of the year will be held during the festival at which time new delegates will be chosen along with the site for the 2009 festival and meeting dates for 2008-2009. —*Donna Wollenslegel*

The **Southeast Region** hosted the Mid-Winter Institute in Marietta, which went well. Due to the snow, the delegate meeting for March 8 was canceled and has not been rescheduled. Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County has applied for grants for repairs and restoration of their theater. LTTC will be holding a benefit for Relay for Life on March 15 which is a successful partnership of two non-profit groups.

The Southeast OCTA festival will be held on June 7 at Ohio Valley University in Parkersburg. —*Sally Holmes*

Executive Director Joyce Leahy reports some fun theater reading. Go to blog.dispatch.com/mgrossberg to read the Theatre Talk blog of Columbus Dispatch theater critic Michael Grossberg

WELCOME BACK!

Playhouse South as an OCTA member

The Southwest Region met on February 26 in Cincinnati, with limited attendance due to the bad weather.

It was pointed out that April is Community Theatre Month. Regional Reps would like to know if groups are planning any special activities.

Theater delegates were reminded that they need to notify their Regional Rep of their intent to excerpt at the June festival by the March meeting. The Southwest Regional will be held June 27-28 at Parrish Auditorium in Hamilton. —*John Masterson*

OCTA Board Candidates Wanted!

It's time to think about running for the OCTA Board of Directors. At the present time, there are six three-year terms open. Kathie Brennan is in charge of nominations and will be attending all the regional festivals with Board packet information. Or, you may send her an email at: hrhprincesskathie@juno.com for more details.

April is Community Theatre Month in Ohio

As Christi stated on the front page, Community Theatre is almost universal, be it France, Russia, Italy, Germany, Belgium, or the whole of the United States. And community theaters just don't "put on shows," they are major components of a community. In New Philadelphia, Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County helps put on a benefit annually to help the local Relay for Life. When Hurricane Katrina hit a community theater in Mississippi, Ohio theaters and even all of OCTA chipped in and sent money to help. When Mid Ohio Valley Players' theater in Marietta was flooded, many helped them out by sending props and costumes to get them "back on the stage." Fort Findlay Players had the same situation back in August.

So, even though AACT has quit recognizing community theater month, OCTA took charge and has a bill in the legislature to make April Community Theatre Month in Ohio.

OCTA Board member Patt Robb has come up with lots of information to help theaters celebrate theater month. You can find most everything you need on OCTA's website.

Shelley Tolliver from Zanesville designed this year's logo. She is described as a gal who enjoys art in all its forms and has done so since a very early age. She went against the grain to remain left handed after she discovered she could do it. She would sit and draw for hours with her mother and sister. Her father would recite some of the world's greatest poetry with a zany spin to uncap the limits of imagination. Her first step on stage was in grade school as a narrating elf for the annual Holiday PTO meeting. Voted Most Artistic in high school, she went on to win awards in Graphic Design for state in college and now she eagerly explores new avenues of art at Zanesville Community Theatre and as a freelance Interior Designer for R. L. Tolliver & Company.

And when the opportunity arose to design a logo for the Ohio Community Theatre Association (OCTA), Shelley jumped on it. The theater is the one place in all the world where every aspect of art comes alive - from the set to the costumes, to the actors and their chosen performance avenue - it is all there. She believes that community theater is one of the greatest ways people can come together and get to know one another. It's that rare chance that a group of strangers can participate in a project and leave as friends- people of all ages, races and backgrounds as well as kids from different school districts - people can come, share ideas, tell a story, and gain empowerment as the audience reacts in appreciation. "April is Community Theatre Month! I think it is a great opportunity to introduce community theater." states Shelley " It's a crazy, busy world out there and the greatest aspect of community theater is that it can take you out of your 'everyday' and leave you with a wealth of experience and new people in your life - not forgetting you helped bring a story to life and had the opportunity to take audiences out of their 'everyday' even if only for a little while."

And if you missed it on the website, the top ten reasons for participating in and celebrating community theater month are:

- 10-Free Publicity
- 9-Recognize tireless volunteers
- 8-Solicit new volunteers
- 7-Promote your April show
- 6- Promote your May show
- 5-Recognize your Board
- 4-Let your community know you are out there
- 3-All the cool kids are doing it
- 2-Promotional materials are free
- 1-If we don't do it—who else will??**





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